

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 07443 300956Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 280

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 7443

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: ECON, PFOR, SYR, LE
SUBJECT: SARG ECONOMIC TROUBLES AND USG ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 265763

1. MET WITH KHADDAM ON OCTOBER 28 AND ADVISED HIM WE PREPARED TO EXPLORE WITH SARG THE OPTIONS SET FORTH REFTEL. KHADDAM CLEARLY PLEASED AT OUR EXPRESSION OF WILLINGNESS TO BE HELPFUL. SAID HE PERSONALLY NOT FOLLOWING DETAILS OF ECONOMIC PICTURE CLOSELY ENOUGH TO MAKE MEANINGFUL DETERMINATION AND ASKED I MEET WITH DEPPRIMIN FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS JAMIL SHAYYA.

2. HAVE, HOWEVER, SINCE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH IMADI WHO BACK PARTTIME AT MINISTRY OCTOBER 30 AND HAS GIVEN ME APPOINTMENT FOR OCTOBER 31. RAMSEY WILL ACCOMPANY AND WE WILL DETERMINE AT THAT TIME WHETHER IT DESIRABLE PRESS FORWARD WITH MEETING WITH SHAYYA.

3. COMMENT. WE HAVE SCORED THE POLITICAL POINT I HOPED FOR WITH KHADDAM. IMADI IS BETTER EQUIPPED THAN SHAYYA TO CONSIDER THE GAINS AND LOSSES OF OUR OPTIONS, PARTICULARLY THAT OF SHIFTING ALL OR PART OF FY 77 PROGRAM TO CIP RELATED TO REFUGEE INFLUX. WERE WE TO MAKE SUCH A SHIFT, IT WOULD INVOLVE A MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENT TO SARG MINISTRIES WITH WHOM WE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. I WILL TAKE POSITION

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PAGE 02 DAMASC 07443 300956Z

THAT IF RESULTS OF RIYADH AND CAIRO HAVE BEEN AS PROMISING

FINANCIALLY TO SYRIA, AS THEY APPARENTLY HAVE BEEN
POLITICALLY, THEN I WOULD HOPE HE WOULD FIND OTHER
WAY OF MEETING HIS IMMEDIATE FOREIGN EXCHANGE NEEDS.
IN EMPHASIZING OUR READINESS TO SHIFT TO CIP WILL ALSO
NOTE THAT WE WILL NEED CONSIDERABLY MORE DETAIL ON THE
FUNCTIONING OF THE SYRIAN ECONOMY THAN HIS GOVERNMENT
HAS SHARED WITH US TO DATE.

MURPHY

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NNN

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